

WPHL COVID 19 GUIDANCE:

INTRODUCTION: The Wyoming Public Health Laboratory (WPHL) is currently testing for COVID-19, the novel coronavirus. The following information outlines how to submit specimens to the WPHL's for COVID-19.

UPDATES TO WPHL TESTING PRIORITIES:

To ensure WPHL is able to process priority samples and deliver results to providers in a timely manner, please work with your providers to follow the WPHL testing priorities:

- Whether any specific patient should be tested for COVID-19 is at the discretion of the provider; however, because of the shortage of these supplies, not every person with compatible symptoms can be tested for SARS-CoV-2. Please consider the shortage of these supplies when deciding who to test.
- The Wyoming Public Health Laboratory (WPHL) will prioritize testing specimens from patients with the most implications for clinical management, conservation of PPE, and public health control activities. The WPHL testing priorities can be found in the table below and can be found in the most recent [Wyoming Department of Health State Health Advisory](#).



Providers should send samples from patients who do not fall into the WPHL testing priorities to commercial laboratories.



Priority	Clinical Features		Epidemiologic Risk
1	Hospitalized patients or patients living or working in communal settings (such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, or shelters) with fever ¹ or signs/symptoms of respiratory illness without alternative explanatory diagnosis	AND	No source of exposure has been identified
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	Fever ¹ or signs/symptoms of respiratory illness ²	AND	Healthcare workers ³ who performed patient care while symptomatic OR who had close contact ⁴ with a laboratory-confirmed ⁵ COVID-19 patient within 14 days of symptom onset
2	Patients with fever ¹ or signs/symptoms of lower respiratory illness ²	AND	Persons ≥65 years and/or persons with underlying health conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, chronic lung disease, immunocompromised, etc.) OR A person who has continued close contact with persons ≥65 years and/or persons with underlying health conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, chronic lung disease, immunocompromised, etc.).

1. Fever may be subjective or measured ($\geq 100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ or 38.0°C).
2. Signs of respiratory illness include cough or shortness of breath or sore throat.
3. A healthcare worker is defined as someone with direct patient care responsibilities.
4. Close contact is defined as:
 - a. a) being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a healthcare waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case – or –
 - b. b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on) if such contact occurs while not wearing recommended PPE (e.g., gowns, gloves, NIOSH-certified disposable N95 respirator or facemask, and eye protection).
5. Documentation of laboratory confirmation of COVID-19 may not be possible for travelers or persons caring for patients in other countries or U.S jurisdictions

WPHL TESTING SCHEDULE:

- WPHL is performing testing 7 days a week.
- WPHL **does not** guarantee 24-hour turnaround time for results. **Results should be received within 2-3 days of receipt of the specimen at WPHL.**

SAMPLE COLLECTION AND TRANSPORT:

- The WPHL currently only accepts nasopharyngeal swabs.
- WPHL cannot accept post-mortem specimens for testing. Post-mortem specimens must be sent to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for testing. Instructions for the collection and submission of post-mortem specimens can be found here: [COVID-19 Guidance Postmortem Specimens](#)
- Use only synthetic fiber swabs with plastic shafts. Do not use calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts, as they may contain substances that inactivate some viruses and inhibit PCR testing.
- Place each swab immediately into a sterile tube containing 2 – 3 mL of viral transport media.
- Refrigerate specimens at 2 - 8° C and ship overnight to WPHL with sufficient ice packs to keep the specimens cold throughout transport. If a delay in testing or shipping is expected, store specimens at -70°C or below and then ship on dry ice.
- Specimens must be shipped in accordance with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Dangerous Goods Regulation or UN 3373 Biological Substance, Category B. For assistance with how to ship according to UN3373 guidelines, contact WPHL.

SAMPLE SUBMISSION:

All providers submitting a sample to WPHL must complete and submit the online requisition form found [here](#).

If you do not complete the online form your sample will not be tested. This form must be submitted, printed, and sent with the specimen to the WPHL.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

For questions about COVID-19 and testing: (307) 777-7431